



ON TARGET

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The price of Freedom is eternal vigilance—

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Thought for the Week: "The practice of our nation for centuries established the rule that, except for matters of direct general and imperial interest, centralisation is unconstitutional." Sir Edward Creasy, famous English constitutional authority, in "History of the English Constitution."

BEHIND THE FRANKLIN RIVER ISSUE: Older supporters of the League of Rights will be aware of the League's long record of concern about genuine conservation and pollution of the environment. We are therefore sympathetic to the viewpoint of several readers who have written offering friendly criticism of our failure to support the campaign to have the Franklin River project halted. Before examining the basic question, we observe that the massive one-sided media campaign against the Franklin River project indicates that it needs no support from the League of Rights. Much of the media campaign has been blatantly dishonest, one of the highlights being headlines which claimed that Prince Charles had aligned himself with opponents of the Franklin dam. The truth is that Prince Charles had in an address expressed concern about the destruction of rain forests around the world by the chip industry, mentioning as an example what was happening in the South-West of Tasmania. He might also have mentioned the chip industry in the Otways, Victoria, which has produced considerable opposition, but not on the scale of the opposition to the Franklin River dam which, on all the evidence available to us, will have far less effect on the environment than many other activities throughout Australia.

It is instructive to recall that Tasmania under Labor Governments was a pioneer in introducing to Australia one of the greatest hoaxes of this century, the policy of mass medication known as fluoridation of public water supplies. The completely unscientific policy of introducing a highly toxic substance into the public water supplies has never aroused the wrath of those highly selective environmentalists who, for example, have staged major protests against the use of nuclear power while remaining silent about the

coal-mining industry, which nearly every year suffers major disasters with loss of life. The tragedy about the conservation movement is that it has to a great extent been taken over by the Marxist totalitarians, who are exploiting larger numbers of sincere but misled people. It is only necessary to read Australian Marxist literature to note the emphasis being given to the Franklin River dam issue.

The well-informed Marxists are aware that the Franklin dam issue is but a means to a longer-term objective, which is to progressively centralise power on a global scale. Ever since its inception, the United Nations and its associated organisations, the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to mention only two, have been engaged in undermining national sovereignties. It is not so many years ago that the Fraser Government, with Mr. Andrew Peacock as Foreign Minister, was attempting to close down the Rhodesian Information Centre because of a directive from the United Nations. If areas of any national State are to be designated as "World Wildernesses", and the responsibility of the "international community", the drive to break down national sovereignties is further accelerated. While the Fraser Government was delighted with the High Court decision upholding its constitutional right to use its External Powers to legislate nationally on Aboriginal affairs, undermining State rights, as yet it has not moved on the Franklin issue as demanded by the Labor Socialists - primarily for political reasons. As on the retrospective tax legislation, when the government found itself in complete agreement with the Labor Socialists, it is possible that the Fraser government will still move to the Socialist position on the dam issue. Fundamental principles no longer concern Mr. Fraser and his Cabinet colleagues - only holding on to power.

In the long run freedom and self-government are more important even than physical vandalism. If individuals do not have any genuine freedom to choose, even to make a wrong decision, then the way is open to totalitarianism. It is impossible to dispute the fact that the Franklin dam project offers the cheapest way to obtain this power with the least environmental problems. For our own part, we are not enthusiasts for large-scale hydro-electric schemes and believe that in a sane society there would be far less need for power, much of it used to sustain economic activity which is not really necessary. But the opponents of the Franklin dam are not discussing this question. They are bluntly saying that the people of Tasmania do not have the right to use their own resources as they see fit.

We are not impressed with the claim that if the Franklin river is dammed, Australians generally will experience a feeling of great loss. Until the present controversy started, the great majority of Australians had never heard of the Franklin River.

Only an extremely small minority, including Tasmanians, have ever visited the river. If mainland Australians permit themselves to be manipulated by a highly financed campaign to attempt to interfere in the affairs of the Tasmanians, then they are inviting interference in their own affairs, which is what the totalitarians desire.

If Federal power is used to dictate to the Tasmanians, this will be one more major wedge driven in the fabric of the Federal Constitution. By all means let those who are fully informed on the Franklin River project make their reasoned contribution to the debate, appealing if they so desire, to Tasmanians to think again. But the physical invasion of Tasmania to conduct what can only be described as a guerrilla campaign, can only produce increasing bitterness amongst Tasmanians. Crushing taxation and inflation are having a much more insidious effect on Australia than a hundred Franklin River dams. When are we going to see a media-backed campaign of obstruction to taxation, with hundreds prepared to be imprisoned rather than bend the knee to the Taxation Monopoly?

BRIEF COMMENTS: Generally unreported is the news that the Soviet Union and Communist China will in March hold a second round of talks to discuss ways to normalise relations. This meeting, to take place in Moscow, will follow talks which took place in Peking last October, the first formal talks for three years. Previous talks had been suspended by China following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Developing closer relations - economic relations have always continued - demonstrate the shortsightedness of the West's policy of attempting to build up Communist China as a "balance" against the Soviet Union. The government of Taiwan has consistently warned against the folly of trying to appease Communist China.

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America's difficulty in playing "the China card" has been aggravated by the American attempt to slow the flood of Chinese textile exports into the U.S.A. The U.S.A. State Department has been forced to warn Peking that unless Chinese exports are reduced, a quota system will be imposed in an attempt to help the badly depressed American textile industry. Peking has insisted that it must gain a bigger percentage of the American market to help reduce its trade deficit. Like Communist Poland, Communist China also has international debts and the international bankers want at least their interest payments.

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Addressing the Young Liberal national convention in Adelaide on

January 14th, Prime Minister Fraser again revealed how unprincipled he is. "Anti-Socialist" Fraser told the Young Liberals, many of whom openly support the philosophy of socialism, that while in the past the government had allowed industries to determine the direction of spending on new technology, Mr. Peacock, Minister for Industry and Commerce, would consider whether "specific policies for specific industries and technology should be introduced." As for private investment, this was falling under the impact of the recession, and "When private investment is down it is appropriate for Government to examine the levels of its own investment". Poor Mr. Hayden will have little left to campaign on if Mr. Fraser continues to adopt his policies!

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Treasurer John Howard's decision, supported by the Reserve Bank, and allegedly based on the Campbell Commission, to allow up to ten foreign banks to operate in Australia, is but one more step towards extending the international financial system. Australia has more than sufficient banks to create and administer the financial credit required for the Australian economy.

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In an attempt to placate public opinion, the government has announced a reduction in the number of migrants because of the unemployment situation. While this reduction will be welcomed if it applied mainly to non-Europeans, we wonder what has happened to that old argument that a bigger migrant in-flow helps to stimulate the economy?

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The fall in interest rates has set off speculation - much of it motivated by self-interest - that the worst housing slump in 20 years is about to end. A spokesman for the Housing Industry Association, Mr. Les Groves, says that "If all the indications are right, we may have turned the corner." Under present financial policies, any upturn in the economy requires a greater rate of money creation. Such creation makes higher inflation mathematically certain. But if the Fraser Government continues with present policies, unemployment is destined to become even more horrendous. This will require a further increase in Mr. Howard's deficit which, together with the government's insane policy of relying heavily upon foreign investments, will make any substantial drop in interest rates impossible. We would not be surprised to see interest rates increase again later in the year. This is almost certain if the Fraser government manages to win an early election - with lower interest rates as one of its policies!

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